

Washington, D.C. - Today, on a bipartisan vote of 380 to 45, the U.S. House of Representatives passed Congresswoman Melissa Bean's (IL-08) *Small Business Lending Improvements Act* (H.R. 1332), which helps small companies obtain the capital they need to invest and strengthen our economy. The legislative victory is another example of Bean's continuing efforts on behalf of the small business community.

Bean spent twenty-years in the high-tech industry in both corporate America and as a small business owner before bringing her real world business perspective to Congress. As Finance and Tax Subcommittee Chairwoman of the House Small Business Committee, Bean is working to ensure that the Small Business Administration's lending initiatives are working efficiently and providing entrepreneurs with the capital they need to grow. In fiscal year 2006, businesses in Bean's own Eighth District received 256 (7a) loans totaling \$30,844,000.

"Small businesses are the growth engine for our nation's economy. By improving our federal lending initiatives, this bill helps create an environment that fosters innovation, job creation and economic expansion," Bean said. "I am proud to have introduced this legislation, and I commend Congress for stepping forward to demonstrate bipartisan support for the small business community."

Small businesses create up to 80 percent of the new jobs in the United States. Estimates by the House Committee on Small Business indicate that every \$33,000 in small business lending creates one new job. Bean's bill, the *Small Business Lending Improvements Act* (H.R. 1332), strengthens access to capital programs for U.S. small businesses with provisions that will:

- Reduce burdensome borrower and lender fees on 7(a) loans
- Increase lender participation in the 7(a) program, particularly by small banks and community lenders, by reducing application burdens and expediting the process
- Create an initiative to reduce borrower and lender fees to doctors and dentists located in federally designated Health Professional Shortage Areas, and to eliminate those fees and increase the guarantee for loans made to veteran owned small businesses.
- Make long overdue changes to strengthen the community ties between certain lenders (Certified Development Companies (CDC)/504) and ensure that they truly represent local needs by requiring that each is comprised of members from the community it serves.
- Provide a simplified and straightforward standard for determining small business loan eligibility.

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